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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates endeavors in India over the last two decades to implement cultural integration and national unity through education. A major objective is to assess the relationship between the multicultural aspects of Indian civilization and the goal of a national consciousness. A description of the social, linguistic, and religious make-up of India is provided in an attempt to indicate something of the complexity of modern Indian society. A chronological discussion of important educational events since India's independence in 1947 is presented. Work of the various committees appointed by the government of India to examine the educational situation and make recommendations is reviewed. The report of the Committee on Emotional Integration is analyzed in detail because it is considered by the author to be a storehouse of ideas on emotional and national integration, and it was responsible for the National Policy on Education Bill of 1968. The findings of this study are that, while education has succeeded to a large extent in breaking down the caste and creed barriers in sizeable sections of the population of India, it has not been very successful in tackling the problems of regionalism, provincialism, and linguistics. (Author/DB)

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EDUCATION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN A MULTICULTURAL, DEVELOPING COUNTRY: A CASE STUDY OF INDIA

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EDUCATION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN A MULTICULTURAL, DEVELOPING COUNTRY: A CASE STUDY OF INDIA.

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The purpose of this short study is to explore the endeavours made in India - a multicultural, developing country - during the last two decades to bring about emotional, social, and national integration through the instrumentality of education.

It is a widely known fact that India is still a developing country in the economic sense; what may not be so well known, to some people at least, is the fact that it is also a multicultural country with a multitude of social, economic, cultural, and religious differences. It is this fact which seems to have prompted the late British historian Arnold Toynbee to remark once that India "is a society of the same magnitude as our Western civilization ... a whole world in herself."[1]

India, also known as Bhārat, is the seventh largest and the second most populous country in the world. It has an area of 1, 261, 817 sq. miles and a population of not less than 600 million[2] at the present time, comprising an enormous variety of distinct racial and ethnic types. From time immemorial, elements of no less than six distinct races[3], in nine

variations, came from outside and furnished elements in the population of India. Corresponding to this complexity of the racial composition is the wealth of different cultural patterns, ranging from the primitive to the most sophisticated. Some sociologists have been able to identify as many as 3,000 social units, usually referred to as castes and sub-castes, in the modern Indian society[4]. About twenty-two per cent of India's population comprises what is generally designated as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward classes. These categories of people form, generally speaking, the weakest section of the total population, socially, politically, economically, and in many other respects. In this context, it must be emphasized that the Constitution of India has prescribed certain protective measures and safeguards for these classes of people, and discrimination on the basis of caste is a punishable offence under the Indian Penal Code[5].

Language has always been an index of cultural and social groupings, and since India became independent in 1947, linguistics distinctions have assumed great political importance. The 1961 census enumerated a total of 1,652 mother-tongues which have been grouped into 826 languages and dialects[6]. The four major language groups represented in India are the Indo-Aryan, the Dravidian, the Tibeto-Burman, and the Munda. The Constitution of India recognizes fifteen major languages, i.e., (in the order of the number of people speaking them)

Hindi, Telugu, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, and Sanskrit. The Official Languages Bill was passed in the Indian Parliament in 1968 making Hindi the official language of India and retaining English as an alternative official or "link" language for certain purposes. Following the recommendations of the States Reorganization Commission, the inter-State boundaries of the Indian Union were re-drawn in 1956 with a view to bringing people who speak the same language and its related dialects under one administration.

India's amazing diversity is manifested in her religions as well. As the distinguished American Indologist W. Norman Brown says:

> India has had one of the world's most creative religious and philosophical developments. Among the religions that originated in India are Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, a number of lesser-known faiths, and many reform movements, especially those allied to Hinduism. In addition, India has received two great religions of Semitic origin, Islam and Christianity, which have assumed distinctive form there. An ancient but small Jewish community survives, and India has most of the world's practising Zoroastrians (Parsis). India's religious creativity has been accompanied by a distinctive and subtle philosophy. Indeed, religion and philosophy have never maintained separate existence in India[7].

Although nearly 83 per cent of the population are adherents of Hinduism, according to the Constitution of the country, India is a secular democracy with no official State religion. Over eleven per cent of the people are Muslims, the largest

religious minority. Next in number comes Christians (2.6%) followed by Sikhs (about 1.9%). Buddhists, Jains, and other smaller religious groups constitute the remaining one and one-half per cent of the population[8].

Because of the diversity and multiplicity of races, ethnic groups, languages and religions found in India, some superficial observers of the Indian scene have sometimes asserted that India has never been a nation but was merely a geographical expression like Europe and Africa until recent years. No serious student of Indian history, however, subscribes to this view. Scholars such as Basham[9], Kosambi[10], Majumdar (D.N.)[11], Majumdar (R.C.)[12], Mookerji[13], Motwami[14], O'Malley[15], Rawlinson[16], and Sarkar[17] hold the view that in spite of all the apparent diversity so easily noticeable, there has existed in India a fundamental unity for a period of more than two millenia. As Basham says, "India and China have, in fact, the oldest continuous cultural traditions in the world."[18] And again, "In respect of the length of continuous tradition China comes second to India and Greece makes a poor third."[19]

Although India's unique civilization has been a unifying factor and the intermixture of its peoples has produced a degree of uniformity, many differences originating in the distant past still persist. As a matter of fact, some of these fissiparous tendencies and centrifugal forces became more evident after the advent of India's independence in 1947. Barriers of caste and class, language, religion,

and region were forgotten during the fight for a common cause, namely, the liberation of the Motherland from a foreign yoke. But after the attainment of political independence, some of the social, economic, cultural, and religious differences which lay dormant for a long time were reawakened and they came to the fore gradually. That some of these newly resurrected forces and factors had assumed national proportions within a few years after India's independence is evident from the following excerpt from a speech which Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, delivered in 1955. He said:

> We should not become parochial, narrow-minded, provincial, communal and caste-minded, because we have a great mission to perform. Let us, the citizens of the Republic of India, stand up straight, with straight backs and look up at the skies, keeping our feet firmly planted on the ground, and bring about this synthesis, this integration of the Indian people. Political integration has already taken place to some extent, but what I am after is something much deeper than that - an emotional integration of the Indian people so that we might be welded into one, and made into one strong national unit, maintaining at the same time all our wonderful diversity.[20]

In the very same year 1955, the Government of India appointed the States Reorganization Commission to examine and to recommend new State boundaries on the basis of the major languages spoken in the various regions of the country. This Commission, among other things, made a number of recommendations for special safeguards for linguistic minorities and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes scattered thoughout the country.

In due course the problem of national integration

caught the attention of the Indian intellectual and academic community as well and as a result, the University Grants Commission organized a Seminar on national integration. This Seminar was attended by representatives of various universities, cultural organizations, and other similar bodies. The Seminar recommended rapid economic development accompanied by equality of opportunity and removal of disparities of income and wealth; achievement of universal primary and secondary education; study of Indian history with particular emphasis on the social and economic life of the people; reforms in the system of general education and studies of languages ans scripts; cautious use of mass media of communication, etc. to promote national integration[21]. It is difficult to assess to what extent the above mentioned recommendations were implemented.

In 1960, the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, the dominant and most powerful political party of the country, appointed a National Integration Committee with Mrs. Indira Gandhi as its chairperson. The report of this committee was ready by May 1961 and its recommendations were formally adopted without much delay by the All-India Congress Committee. At about the same time, in pursuance of the recommendations made by the State Education Ministers' Conference held in New Delhi on November 4 & 5, 1960, the Government of India set up a Committee on May 15, 1961, to examine the role of education in promoting emotional integration in national

life, and to suggest suitable programmes in this regard. The recommendations of this committee which submitted its report to the Ministry of Education of the Government of India on August 30, 1962, will be examined in detail subsequently.

Before proceeding with a detailed discussion of the afore-mentioned report, it seems relevant to outline the outcomes of a very important conference, i.e., the National Integration Conference, convened by the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. This conference was attended by the Central Government Ministers, Chief Ministers of States, leaders of various political parties represented in the Indian Parliament, Vice-Chancellors and other educationists, scientists, industrialists, and a number of other leading personalities from all over the country. The conference discussed the report of the National Integration Committee set up by the Indian National Congress, the decisions of the Chief Ministers Conferences held earlier during the year, and the recommendations of the Seminar on National Integration organized by the University Grants Commission in April 1958. It also considered the economic aspects of integration and a code of conduct for political parties, the press, students, and the people in general.

The general discussion of this conference revealed an identity of views with regard to the fundamental unity of India in the midst of diversity. At the same time, nobody could ignore the existence of various fissiparous and disruptive tendencies like communalism, casteism, regionalism, and

linguism which tended to disrupt the solidarity of the people of India. Most of the conference participants were of the view that while some grup loyalties based on religious, regional or linguistic considerations may be admissible, these should be checked and subordinated to the national interest. They were, however, sympathetic to the legitimate apprehensions and grievances of certain minority groups.

The conclusions and recommendations as embodied in a 27-point statement issued by the conference at the end of its four-day deliberations were broadly divided into educational measures to foster and promote emotional integration of the nation, a code of conduct in respect of political parties in particular, and economic programmes designed to remove regional economic disparities and barriers to free movement of skilled labour and managerial personnel between different States. The conference also decided to set up a National Integration Council to review all matters pertaining to national integration and to make recommendations thereon.

In accordance with the decision taken by the N. I. Conference a 37-member National Integration Council under the chairmanship of the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, was constituted on October 31, 1961. This high-power Council met for the first time on June 2 & 3, 1962, and appointed four committees to study and to report on (i) regionalism, (ii) communalism, (iii) code of conduct for students and teachers

and (iv) the place of English and Hindi and regional languages in University education.

The recommendations made by the fourth committee on languages which were formally adopted by the N. I. Council are particularly relevant to the present discussion. Stated briefly, this committee, while emphasizing the importance of English as a language of international link, expressed itself in favour of its replacement by the regional languages as media of instruction in Universities. Hindi was to be taught as a compulsory subject in order to attain the status of the inter-university and inter-State link language[22].

Now, we will proceed to an analysis of the Report of the Committee on Emotional Integration mentioned earlier[23]. As stated before, this Committee was set up by the Government of India on May 15, 1961, to examine the role of education specifically in promoting emotional integration in national life, and to suggest suitable programmes in this regard. The 12-member Committee included some of the most distinguished personages from various walks of life in India, including the present Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The Committee submitted its final report on August 30, 1962. It is rather difficult to analyse or digest all the ideas put forward in the 277 pages of the Report of the Committee on Emotional Integration with its 213 recommendations! All that one can hope to do in the time and space available is to summarize

its main conclusions. The report starts with the following statement:

> Among the subjects, which are exercising the mind of educated India at the present day, the question of national integration, of which emotional integration is easily the most important component element, occupies the foremost position[24].

This opening sentence seems to set the tone for the whole report. From the very outset, the committee took particular care to clarify the concept of national integration in the following words:

> It should be made clear without any doubt that in speaking about integration, no sensible person thinks in terms of attempting to bring about a dull, colourless sameness in all respects. Unity is not uniformity. No one is asked to give up his faith in the religion of his fathers, his love for the language..... or his pride in the lives and achievements of the great men and women who lived and worked in the part of India he himself lives in. Such faith, love and pride is justified and legitimate. Such loyalties do not detract from loyalty to the nation..... There is no either-or relationship between sectional loyalties and national loyalty. The two subsist together. 'Unity in Diversity' is a phrase which has almost become a cliche but it is a phrase which, nevertheless, expresses almost fully the idea underlying the urge for national integration[25].

One of the methods adopted by the Committee in its investigation was to elicit public opinion on the question of emotional integration through a questionnaire. Out of the more than 1,200 replies received, the committee condensed the following working definition of emotional integration:

> Emotional Integration... has been considered as a feeling of oneness, brotherhood and patriotism ... But (it) does not mean complete unification

of our diversities or shedding of the very characteristics that make Indian culture a diverse one... it has been defined as a feeling of oneness which may transcend all group or cultural differences and synthesise the different religions, castes, linguistic communities emotionally into a compact whole[26].

The Committee after having taken note of the various unifying elements to be found in the history, culture, and some other values and traditions of India, went on to identify some of the more noxious factors and forces which tended to undermine the unity and to hamper the integration of the nation. According to the findings of the Committee, they are casteism, communalism, regionalism, provincialism, linguism, frustation among youth, and lack of idealism in public activities, in that order.

The Committee had no doubt that education could play a vital role in counteracting the above-mentioned fissiparous trends and tendencies and therefore, after stressing the absolute necessity of a proper philosophy of education, proceeded to discuss in detail the whole spectrum of the prevailing system of education in India and the reorientation it needed, under the following nine headings, i.e., (i) General and Major Policies, (ii) Language and Script, (iii) School Education, (iv) University Education, (v) Youth Programmes, (vi) Adult Education, (vii) Teachers, (viii) Curriculum, and (ix) Textbooks and other Reading Materials. For reasons that are too obvious, no attempt will be made to quote here all the 213 recommendations the Committee suggested as a result

of this study. Only those suggestions which appear to be the most important and relevant are listed below:

(i) General and Major Policies: (a) it is necessary to evolve an effective national policy in education which will bring the Indian States and Territories closer together; (b) there should be a common pattern of education in the country which will minimize confusion and co-ordinate and maintain standards; (c) the recommendations made in the interest of emotional integration should be classified under national priorities and it is of the utmost importance that speedy and effective action taken to implement them[27].

(ii) Language and Script: (a) the use of the Roman script may be permitted in certain areas for an interim period to enable persons to improve their acquaintance with Hindi; (b) throughout India the international numerals must be used; (c) the two link languages - Hindi and English - should be effectively taught at university level so that conditions of emotional and intellectual isolation are not created[28].

(iii) School Education: (a) the principles of Basic education emphasized by Mahatma Gandhi and the objectives outlined at the 11th session of the Unesco General Conference in 1960 should be kept in mind in planning courses and teaching methods for primary schools; (b) schemes for the expansion of girls' education and the training of women teachers should be accelerated; (c) provision should be made for the teaching of

the regional languages, Indian History, and Geography in continuing education courses; (d) children should be taught to sing the National Anthem in unison and should also be taught the meaning of its verses; one of the first duties of citizenship to be taught at the very earliest stage is reverence for the Flag and the Anthem; (e) National Days should be celebrated by schools with the full participation of the teachers and the community; (f) special meetings of the school assembly should be held at the beginning of each term when the headmasters speak to the children on any topic dealing with the unity and oneness of the country; at these special meetings the pupils will take a pledge of loyalty to India; (g) audio-visual materials should be increasingly used in schools to give children a clear and vivid picture of various aspects of Indian life; (h) schools may also undertake several projects which will improve the general knowledge of the children about their country[29].

(iv) University Education: (a) Universities must maintain uniformly high standards through a judicious basis of admission, and the recruitment of staff on the basis of academic qualifications, character and personality; (b) the selection of teachers on the basis of caste and community should, on no account, be encouraged and universities must make a determined effort to fight casteism and communalism in all their manifestations; (c) caste or communal hostels

should not be permitted; (d) it is necessary to foster mutual appreciation of the various religions in the country and universities can assist in this matter by encouraging research on various topics which help towards a greater understanding of and sympathy with different religions; (e) there should be no migratory restrictions imposed on students ans no preference should be shown to students from any particular area in the matter of admission to a university; (f) regional languages should be adopted as media or instruction in universities with a view to bridge the gap between the intellectual elite and the mass of the people; at the same time, special attention must be paid to the teaching of Hindi and English, when the change-over to the regional languages is accomplished; (g) special efforts must be made to forge links between universities in different parts of the country when the regional languages become media of instruction; (h) there should be provision for English as an associate medium of instruction in the universities; (i) a special course dealing with national integration should be made compulsory for all college students throughout the country at the degree level[30].

(v) Youth Programmes: (a) an annual inter-State work camp should be held where students in considerable numbers should participate during the vacation in the construction of projects of national importance; (b) an All-India Youth Council should be set up to co-ordinate all the youth programmes taken

up by the Central and State governments and also to help these various agencies to extend their efforts; (c) the scheme of rendering compulsory national service for a period of about one year, before entering life or continuing higher education, should be tried out in certain selected areas as a pilot project; (d) special attention should be paid to holiday camps for young people; (e) a network of youth hostels should be established all over India[31].

(vi) Adult Education: (a) education organized for the adult population should also be further education which mainly stems from individual interests-economic, cultural, and social; (b) workers' education should cover the entire country enabling workers to take an intelligent and constructive part in citizenship; (c) background pamphlets on the institutions and way of life of people in different parts of India should be specially prepared for workers[32].

(vii) Teachers: (a) The Union Ministry of Education should implement a scheme providing for a national minimum scale of salaries for teachers in the primary, middle and secondary schools; (b) other ancillary measures to improve the economic and social status of teachers will also have to be taken up on a country-wide basis; (c) a clean-cut programme for teacher training which will promote a national outlook, a sense of citizenship and unity should be drawn up after evaluating present practice; (d) excursions, inter-school visits, community work and cultural activities should form part of the

carefully planned training given to student-teachers; (c) the State Governments should depute their curriculum experts to work in mutual consultation and draw up a suitable curriculum for all training institutions keeping the national objectives in view[33].

(viii) Curriculum: (a) an efficient and well-staffed curriculum research unit should be set up in each State and also at the Centre under the National Council of Educational Research and Training. These units should work in close co-operation with textbook bureaux in teacher-training colleges and the result of their research should form the basis of curriculum construction and criteria for textbooks; (b) the idea of national unity and the unity of mankind should be introduced from the very outset in the curriculum with due regard to children's age and understanding[34].

(ix) Textbooks and Other Reading Materials: (a) the highest priority should be given, in programmes for emotional integration, to the proper writing, illustration and production of textbooks at all levels of education and the building up of a storehouse of attractive and imaginative supplementary reading material; (b) History and Geography textbooks, as the subjects demand all-India treatment, should be Centrally produced; unfair suppression of detail, however, should be avoided and the facts of history should not be distorted in the attempt to promote integration; (c) in the approach to history teaching

and consequently in the writing of history textbooks stress should be laid on the cultural and social relationships of the people of India down the ages; Geography textbooks should show children that we live today in an interdependent world; (d) brief, attractively illustrated booklets for children on various subjects of Indian economy and planning should be published besides books on traditional folk-lore and folk-songs from various parts of the country with transliterated texts and the translation; (e) annual book fairs and travelling book exhibitions should be held to promote quality of independent publishing and to stimulate public interest in India's major languages and their literature; (f) the free flow of books to India should not in any way be impeded by trade and import restrictions[35].

Anyone who reads this Committee report would admit that it is a storehouse of ideas on emotional and national integration. But, as the Committee itself foresaw, tolerance charity, and compassion were needed to implement its numerous recommendations. Although the Committee did not anticipate any instant results, unfortunately for the people of India, only very few of its many valuable recommendations were fully and effectively implemented due to the constraints imposed on the authorities concerned by a variety of forces and factors, not the least among them being the resistance put up by certain vested interests.

Among the recommendations which were implemented the most important and the most far reaching in its consequences, may be the one on an effective national policy in education. It was, however, only in 1968 that the Indian parliament formally passed a Resolution on National Policy on Education[36].

It is relevant and interesting to investigate further what happened in India between 1962 and 1968 in the realm of education and emotional and national integration. Among other things, the Government of India by a Resolution dated July 14, 1964, appointed an Education Commission to advise it on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects. This 17-member Commission under the chairmanship of an eminent Indian scientist, Dr. D. S. Kothari, included among its personnel not only some of the most distinguished Indian educationists but also five experts from abroad. The Report[37] which this Commission submitted on June 29, 1966, besides being a weighty and impressive volume of 692 pages containing some 230 major recommendations, is a unique educational document in some ways. For the first time in the history of education in India, this Report dealt with all aspects and sectors of education in a comprehensive manner reflecting the national aspirations of the people.

It is out of the domain of the present study to

enter into a detailed discusssion of this Report. What is going to be presented is only some of its salient features which are pertinent to the theme of this paper.

The two key-words 'national development' to be found in the sub-title of the report are very significant; they convey the basic thought and orientation of this study. The following are some of the major problems of national development which the report identifies: (a) self-sufficiency in food; (b) economic growth and full employment; (c) social and national integration; (d) political development. After pointing out the part education should play for achieving the national objectives of self-sufficiency in food, economic growth and full employment, the report goes on to state as follows:

> Even more important is the role of education in achieving social and national integration. Indian society is hierarchical, stratified and deficient in vertical mobility. The social distance between the different classes, and particularly between the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, is large and is tending to widen. Our people profess a number of different religions; and picture becomes even more complicated because of caste, an undemocratic institution which is still powerful and which, strangely enough, seems to have extended its sphere of influence under the very democratic processes of the Constitution itself. The situation, complex as it was, has been made critical by recent developments which threaten both national unity and social progress[38].

If a change for the better from the situation described above "is to be achieved without violent revolution (and even then it would still be necessary) there is one instrument, and one instrument only, that can be used:

EDUCATION."[39] The faith of the Commission in education as the instrument of emotional, social, and national integration is very clear from this categorical statement.

The commission states as a well-known fact that the existing system of education in India is largely unrelated to life and that there is a wide gulf between its content and purposes and the concerns of national development. It lists several instances of such a state of affairs. With reference to social and national integration it writes as follows:

> -instead of promoting social and national integration and making an active effort to promote national consciousness, several features of the educational system promote divisive tendencies: caste loyalties are encouraged in a number of private educational institutions; the rich and the poor are segregated in schools, the former attending the better type of private schools which charge fees while the latter are forced, by circumstances, to attend free government or local authority schools of poor quality[40];

The Commission is very emphatic in reiterating its concern regarding the issue of integration as evidenced by the following statement: "Social and national integration is crucial to the creation of a strong, united country; which is an essential pre-condition for all progress."[41] And again:

> Social and national integration is a major problem which will have to be tackled on several fronts including education. In our view, education can and should play a very significant role in it by
> - introducing a common school system of public education;
> - making social and national service an integral part of education at all stages;
> - developing all modern Indian languages, and taking necessary steps to enrich Hindi as quickly as possible so that it is able to

function effectively as the official language of the Union; and
- promoting national consciousness[42].

The Commission then goes on to elaborate each of the four points mentioned above and to make a number of practical suggestions which are in tune with the recommendations of the Committee on Emotional Integration discussed earlier. There is an implicit admission here that many of the important recommendations of the Committee of 1962 had not been implemented to any great extent even after a period of four years.

Within a few months after the publication of the Report of the Education Commission 1964-66, the Government of India constituted a committee of the members of Parliament to study the report and to prepare the draft of a statement on National Policy on Education for its consideration. On the basis of the document prepared by the Parliamentary committee, the Government of India finally formulated its National Policy on Education and issued it in the form of a Resolution dated July 24, 1968. The aim of National Policy on Education was presented as follows:

> The Government of India is convinced that a radical reconstruction of education on the broad lines recommended by the Education Commission is essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration and for realising the ideal of a socialistic pattern of society. This will involve a transformation of the system to relate it more closely to the life of the people, a continuous effort to expand educational opportunity; a sustained and intensive effort to raise the quality of education at all stages; an emphasis on the development of science and technology and the cultivation of moral and social values. The

> educational system must produce young men and women of character and ability committed to national service and development. Only then will education be able to play its vital role in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture, and strengthening national integration[43].

That the Government of India considers the fostering and promotion of national integration as one of the most important aims of its National Policy on Education, there is no doubt. However, what some critics of the Government may question is the will, determination, dedication, and enthusiasm displayed by the people concerned in supporting as well as implementing such a vital policy of national importance.

It was stated earlier[44] that a 37-member high-power National Integration Council under the chairmanship of the then Prime Minister of India was constitued on October 31, 1961. This Council has continued to function to this day, chiefly through its Standing Committee. In a declaration of objectives adopted by this Council in June 1968, it declared in emphatic terms that,

> The foundation of our national life is common citizenship, unity in diversity, freedom of religion, secularism, equality, justice - social, economic and political and fraternity among all communities. The National Integration Council reiterates its faith in these values and dedicates itself to their achievement[45].

At its meeting in October, 1968, the Standing Committee of the National Integration Council recommended the setting up of a number of Committees composed of members drawn from various fields of national life to act as spearheads for a mass movement in the cause of national integration.

As a result of this recommendation a number of specialized committees were set up. One such committee was a 40-member Committee of educationists and student leaders under the chairmanship of the Union Minister of Education and Youth Services. After having been inaugurated by the Prime Minister of the country, a token its importance, this committee has been meeting twice a year since 1970. The Committee has deliberated and taken decisions on a variety of matters pertaining to the role of education in promoting emotional, social, and national integration. For lack of time and space, it is not feasible to go into all the scores of ideas and recommendations which have emanated from this committee. Be that as it may, one must say a word about the "National Integration Samitis (Associations)" which the committee recommended to be set up in all the universities, colleges, and other higher educational institutions of India. Such Associations have been already functioning in a few universities since 1967, the Mahatma Gandhi Centenary year. The committee recommended that the existing associations should be strenthened and where they did not exist, they should be established[46]. Reports of the activities already carried out or proposed to be carried out by some of these "Samitis" make interesting reading.

National Integration was one of the important themes of the observance of the International Education Year (1970) in India as part of the world-wide Unesco sponsored programme[47].

In this connection a special function was organized in New Delhi on November 13, 1970. During course of the inaugural address, Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao, the then Union Minister of Education, expressed the opinion that the two important things needed in India which would enable its people to meet the many challenges facing the country and to realize their national aspirations were education and national integration. After elaborating on this statement, the Minister went on to say:

> We propose to intensify programmes of national integration and launch youth service activities. In the field of national integration, our objectives are: to foster the idea that India is one nation and it belongs to every Indian, irrespective of caste, creed or colour; that Indian culture is a composite one drawn from many streams and developed over many centuries; that, therefore, there should be no conflict among the different streams that have contributed to the composite Indian culture; and that it is utterly wrong and anti-national to say that any community or group should be Indianised. An attempt should be made to make every citizen feel that he is an Indian. This will be the first step before the sense of international amity is fostered among the coming generations[48].

Dr. Rao concluded his address on a futuristic note expressing the following noble sentiments and aspirations:

> What with the technological advances that may be made during the next two decades, the world will indeed be too small a place to make distinctions between nations, races, religions and ethnic groups. Let us hope that the future generation at least is brought up in the ideals of the 'dignity of man' wherever he belongs, and, that all people, throughout the world, will be one large family. Let us start putting into practice what every nation has been practising for centuries[49].

This seems to be a convenient point to pause and ask the question, "To what extent has education succeeded in

bringing about emotional, social, and national integration since India entered the world scene as an independent county in 1947?" During the period of India's struggle for independence, a sense of national unity and identity was forged among its multitude of inhabitants with varying backgrounds and differing group loyalties. But after the advent of Independence many of the differences which were submerged for several decades came to the surface again. Some of these separatist tendencies became a source of great concern for the leaders and the Government of the Union of India almost since its establishment. The attempts made by the various Commissions, Committees, Conferences, and Seminars convened by the Government of India and its associated Organs to study the problem and to suggest appropriate solutions have been reviewed in the foregoing pages laying particular emphasis on the role of education in fostering and promoting emotional, social, and national integration. All the relevant primary source materials available on the topic were consulted for the purpose of this study. The picture that has emerged seems to be neither too dark nor too bright. Education seems to have been instrumental to a large extent in breaking down slowly the barriers due to caste and creed in sizable sections of the population of India; it does not appear to have been very effective so far in tackling the problems of regionalism, provincialism and linguism. Khushwant Singh, a well-known Indian author and publicist, seems to hold the same view as the present investigator with regard to this

conclusion. He writes:

> We (Indians) are one nation - or so we hope. By the Constitution we framed for ourselves, we outlawed discrimination on grounds of race, religion, sex or linguistic differences. We have achieved a certain measure of success in overcoming racial and religious prejudices and giving equality of opportunity to women. At the same time, by redrawing State boundaries on the basis of language, we have encouraged regional chauvinism to grow to dangerous proportions[50].

It is but fair to add here that the present writer do not fully subscribe to whatever Mr. Singh has stated in the article from which I have quoted above.

Besides the official reports and other Government publications, there is a growing body of literature pertaining to the role of education as an instrument of emotional, social, and national integration authored by Indian educationists, political scientists, sociologists, and others. It will not be an easy task to assess the impact these writings have had on the behavioural patterns of the common people of India. In this context, it may not be out of place to make a concluding remark. The task of bringing about emotional, social, and national integration through education and other means cannot be, and should not be, left to the Central and State Governments alone although these two levels of Governments have to play a major role in fostering and strenthening the forces of integration and implementing expeditiously and effectively some of the excellent recommendations made by the various Commissions and Committees. This noble ask of fostering and

promoting national unity and solidarity should be the collective responsibility of all the citizens of India, especially of the better educated people in all walks of life.

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